

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed May 19, 2004 has been reviewed and the comments of the Patent and Trademark Office have been considered. Claims 1-11 were pending in the application. Claims 1 and 7 have been amended, claim 6 has been cancelled and no claims have been newly added. Therefore, claims 1-5 and 7-11 are pending in the application and are submitted for reconsideration.

This amendment changes and deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

Applicants sincerely thank the examiner for indicating that claim 2 is allowed and that claims 6 and 7 contain allowable subject matter.

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 8-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.K. patent 2,347,120 (hereafter “UK ‘120”). Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over UK ‘120 in view of Japanese document 6-107103 (hereafter “JP ‘103”). Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over UK ‘120 in view of Japanese document 6-144141 (hereafter “JP ‘141”). Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over UK ‘120 in view of U.S. patent 6,402,189 to Gray et al. (hereafter “Gray”). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections, with respect to the pending claims, for at least the following reasons.

Applicants have added the subject matter of claim 6 (indicated as containing allowable subject matter in the Office Action) to independent claim 1. Therefore, independent claim 1, and all claims dependent therefrom, are now in condition for allowance.

In view of the above and the indication of allowable subject matter in the Office Action, applicants believe the application is now in condition for allowance or at the very least reduce the number of potential issues in an appeal. If there are any questions regarding the application, or if an examiner's amendment would facilitate the allowance of one or more of the claims, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper, or if a petition for extension of time is required for timely acceptance of same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account No. 19-0741 for any such fees; and applicants hereby petition for any needed extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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